

## OPERATION GERONIMO

After several days of maintenance, training, rest, and recuperation on the beach south of Tuy Hoa, the 1st Brigade readied for Operation GERONIMO I with the mission of exploiting intelligence indicating that the 95th NVA Regiment was operating in the mountainous areas of western Phu Yen Province. The 1-327th first infiltrated south of the Son Be River on 31 October, using small reconnaissance patrols to develop contacts with the enemy. On 6 November, the 1-327th air assaulted to the Dong Tre area, along with the 2-327th and 2-502d. There were significant contacts with the enemy as the three battalions advanced from three different directions. On 8 November, elements of the 1-327th engaged in a vicious fight with an estimated 100 NVA. On 10-11 November, the 2-502d surrounded what proved to be the 5th Battalion of the 95th NVA Regiment. Relentless combat pressure and psychological warfare appeals resulted in 13 enemy killed, 35 captured, and large amounts of equipment confiscated. The battalions continued search and destroy operations until 4 December, with a brief respite for Thanksgiving dinner. In early December, the brigade moved back to Tuy Hoa for a much needed rest. The latter portion of Operation GERONIMO I had been characterized by constant rain. Mountain streams in the area of operation were swollen, and the feet of the men had suffered severely during the constant patrolling. In the 1-327th, for example, forty-seven troopers were evacuated from the operation with foot problems. For its efforts in the operation, particularly its work in decimating an NVA battalion, the 2-502d was cited in a brigade order, a practice instituted by BG Pearson to recognize superior combat performance.